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## Unison Calling

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## UNISON CALLING

With the scientific name Antigone, the sarus crane holds a band  
 of red around its head, a rope worn into the flesh in mourning.  
 They sing this morning, heads back, the female first, then  
 the male. She says two things and he, one, brief in speech.  
 They are the tallest in the world, taller than most men. I have never  
 seen a crane so beautiful, my father says, and as he can't hear me, I don't say  
 anything, his aids left behind again, not liking the sound of his own feet  
 and insects of wet spaces meeting. The cranes grow from what is wet, not  
 his dry mouth, words lost in a syndrome that drags  
 his face in red patches. For some time, Antigone was alive  
 and kept to her father's side, even after she was condemned, inside  
 a cave, wet place. Her losses, mother, brothers, sister, father.  
 If one crane is killed, the other will call for days in mourning. Of the pride  
 of lions my father finds, he presses on the glass like a child,  
 asks: see them? I've never been so close. The cranes dance at times  
 of their own choosing.